

From the Cold

t'Sade

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Curious Cabbit Press

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Version 1.0.0

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1

Roukan was a miserable, terrible town caught between the high-and-mighty kingdom of Franome and the barbaric wastelands of Luxember. And below, like the rotted core of an apple, Carium sat there, waiting with their self-righteousness and pride. Caught between three countries, Roukan had all the signs of being a city with multiple personalities, where everyone's personal vendetta seemed that much easier to get away with.

Winter made everything worse, the icy-cold wind howled loudly. The irresistible force carried just enough humidity to leave a thick dusting of frost across everything that refused to brush away. Maradin reached up and brushed at her hair. It cracked off in her fingers and she pulled her hand back underneath the multiple layers wrapped around her body. A violent shiver wracked her body. Unable to move forward, she leaned against the wall, trying not to think of the gnawing hunger that burned in her tummy. The rough stone wall scraped against her face, even through the thinning fabric of her hood. One shaking hand pressed against the stone, trying to find the strength to move away from the corner.

Fighting against the next round of shivering, she finally pushed herself off the wall and stepped into the crowds. Around her, they parted without even acknowledging her presence, a ghost of dirt in a crowded city. Maradin closed her eyes tightly, trying to think of something other than the frigid pain that numbed her fingers and toes.

Passing by a restaurant, the smells of cooking meat left her feeling weak and helpless. Her hand, barely wrapped in a few ragged strips imitating a glove, clutched the steel fence outside the

restaurant. Beyond the plate glass window, rich people enjoyed their food, wasting entire meals for the homeless when they finished. When she felt the drool starting to form, and the deep primal rumble in her stomach, she looked away. Down the street, a fresh wave of snow and ice whipped down the street, swirling at the cross-streets and catching on the doorways. Her toes felt even colder, looking away at the restaurant and she glanced back. One of the waiters, a human by the looks through the frost-fogged glass, glared at her, his fingers tapping on a circular platter he served drinks from. Feeling his icy gaze even through the growing numbness, Maradin had to step away from the railing. Obvious relief filled his eyes as she padded down the street, away from the food and warmth.

Shadows already started to darken the streets when she looked up from her wandering. The wind cut her, a bitter knife of Nature's wrath. She no longer felt her toes or her fingers, just the terrible sapping weakness of freezing air. Her clothes long since failed to keep her warm and, for a moment, Maradin wondered if she would ever be warm again.

Peering through frozen eyelashes, she saw a familiar temple near the corner. Hope for a warm bed, she hurried across the slush-filled street and padded up the stairs. Her soft boots barely kept the ice from her toes, if she could still feel them. Reaching the heavy wooden door, she rapped her knuckles against the icy surface. It hurt her more than it made a sound. Shivering, she knocked again, praying someone would answer.

No answer came.

Wind slammed into her and she dropped from the blow. Her knee cracked against the stone stairs and she cried out from the pain. Stars sparkled across her vision as she staggered back to her feet. Agony shot down her leg as she almost fell again.

Underneath her frozen hand, the door shifted and Maradin forced herself to step away from it. A guard stuck his head out, shivering from the cold, but otherwise warm. Waves of heat rolled from the door, melting the frost. She remembered the guard, a rather plain-looking man who took a shine to her friend, Ulin. He stared at her, a short sword in his hand, just in case. Seeing just an

homeless girl at the front of the temple, he started to shut the door. Then, a glimmer of recognition crossed his eyes.

“I know you. You had that friend... the girl who looked really young but wasn’t, right?”

Maradin shivered violently and nodded, “Yeah, Ulin.”

“So, is she with you?” There was a disgusting hunger in his voice that Ulin always managed to get out of men. Her body was barely fifteen but she was certified to be in her twenties, something she took full advantage of to get money, food, and shelter. Unfortunately, Ulin wasn’t with Maradin today. She shook her head.

“No, I haven’t seen her for a week, she probably shacked up for the winter.”

“Oh...” The hunger remained in his eyes as they dulled with faint memories. Slowly, they came back into focus, staring at Maradin with sudden and obvious contempt.

“So, what do you want?”

“Shelter? Please?”

He shook his head, “I’m sorry, the priests closed up the temple for the night.”

Maradin tried to look pitiful as she reached out for him. He waved his sword at her for a moment, then withdrew into the temple. Feeling desperate, Maradin grabbed the handle.

“Wait! Please don’t... I’m so cold.”

The guard shrugged, “I don’t care, get a job and home if you can’t count on the temples for shelter.”

Resentment hung in the freezing air as the door closed. Frustration and anger rose up in Maradin and she screamed out through the door, “I bet you would have let me in if Ulin was here!”

No answer was needed and Maradin staggered down the stairs, wrapping her clothes tighter around her body. The icy wind cut through the fabric like it was tissue paper and she shivered violently as she padded down the street. Darkness reached out with cruel claws as she wandered down the street, to the next temple that gave her shelter.

Unlike the first, they didn’t even open the door. The windows were dark, but the warmth inside was too far away to save her. Fighting the numbness from her hands and feet, she almost fell as she stumbled down the stairs. Maradin tried another temple, then a

fourth. Each one was less hospitable than the other. When she finally reached the half-frozen Lux river, Maradin could barely stand. Gasping for breath, she felt the freezing in her lungs, a painful agony that burned deep inside.

Her eyes, half-frozen with unshed tears, caught on a rusted metal ladder leading down to the riverbank. Faint wisps of steam rose up around the ladder, despite the incredible cold. Seeing warmth, she struggled to walk across the street to the ladder, reaching out with a trembling hand. The metal was wet and cold, her hand sticking as she started to crawl down. She had to yank her hand off, leaving bits of skin behind as she slowly crawled down.

Reaching the bottom, she stood in front of a massive sewer pipe. Blissful warmth rose out of the pipe. Stumbling forward, she moaned softly as she felt the heated humid air caress around her. Her feet scraped against the bottom of the pipe. Maradin breathed in deeply, almost choking on the moldy-smelling fumes, but the warmth became too much of a lure. Padding further into the pipe, she felt the dripping heat soak into her clothes. If she left now, the humidity and cold would kill her in a short order. She kept moving forward, hands on the edge, in search for the warmth she craved.

The pipe narrowed until Maradin was required to crouch as she passed through the rusted gates that frequently attempted to block the pipe. Each grate barely covered the opening, with just enough space for her to squeeze by. Her clothes, or what was left of them, caught on the rusted bars, tearing the fabric as she passed, but it continued to grow warmer with each step.

Darkness dominated her vision, but she kept moving forward, keeping her fingers along the edge of the stone pipe. She paused when her fingers brushed against the next grate, the rough metal cutting against her fingers. With a trembling hand, she pressed her body against the metal, waiting for the last waves of shivering cold to finally fade. Her toes burned as she thawed out, finally free of the cold. Gasping from the pain, she found herself crying against the metal grate, knowing the pain would end.

An agony of time later, Maradin finally moaned from the bottom of the pipe. Her clothes were soaked completely but the warm liquid was a drug against her skin. At least it didn't smell like shit or anything else nasty, just the dank smell of some chemicals. Her

fingers trailed through liquid, half-curious of the strange texture, of a thick slime of some sort. Blind, she curled up as she breathed in deeply, the dank smell filling her senses.

Rubbing her fingers together, feeling the thick slime between her fingertips, she let the aches and pains of the winter storm fade. Her eyes drooped and she felt somehow comfortable in the thick and warm stream of slime. Her mind drifted further and she fell asleep, curled up in the darkness.

Her sleeping was interrupted with a soft dripping noise. She moaned and stretched, the slime dripping off her clothes. Taking a deep breath, she arched her back, feeling the layers stretching across her body. The dripping noise continued to splash down in the distance, further down the pipe. Slowly, she pushed herself into a sitting position, her clothes heavy on her body.

Further down the pipe, the dripping noise continued to fill the tunnel. As she listened, the sounds filled the pipe, a soft rhythm of an aqua drum. Maradin started to doze again, her mind following the constant sound when it stopped. Her body froze, a tingling down her spine as she strained to listen to the dripping. It started up again after a long moment, dripping loudly in the pipe. The echoes were almost sensual as they washed over her. With a smile in the darkness, she let her body stretch in the slime, not caring of what it was or if it was safe, just as long as it was warm.

Then the dripping stopped. Jumping at the silence, she sat up and slammed her head against the side of the stone pipe. The metal grate rang out loudly in the darkness as stars exploded across her vision. Yelping, she rubbed her head painfully.

In the distance, the dripping sound started up again. Even through the pain, a curiosity grew inside her. On her hands and knees, Maradin crawled forward, her hands splashing through the thick slime. Her skirt and clothes were soaked and heavy and she fought off the desire to curl up under the weight and drift to sleep again.

She crawled through the pipe for a long time, the only sound was the dripping in front of her. When she stopped, the sounds halted soon after. It wasn't until she started to crawl forward again, did it begin again. She called out, whimpering wordlessly. Echoes were painfully close, and she reached up. Her knuckles bruised

themselves on the top of the pipe, which was less than half the size it was when she entered it. There wasn't even enough room to stand up. Instead, she remained on her hands and knees, holding in place.

Ahead, in the unknown darkness, the dripping noise slowed to a stop. It sounded loud and close. Pressing herself against the edge of the pipe, she called out.

“Hello?”

Rush of water poured out into the slime, like someone emptying a garbage can of water into the ocean. Maradin felt a pressure wave of air rush past her, as if it came from very close. Calling out again, she crawled forward, her clothes dragging behind in the slime.

A soft voice rose up from the darkness.

“Maradin?”

Maradin gasped and froze, the thick liquid dripping off her clothes. The voice was familiar, almost forgotten in the last week of winter.

“Ulin? Is that you?”

Splashing through the pipe, Maradin followed the sound of dripping and Ulin's voice. When she reached a side pipe, one of many she passed, she heard how the voice was drifting down its length. Taking a deep breath, she pushed her way through the pipe, where the river of slime was up to her breasts, soaking her chest and legs with the hot liquid.

Finally, a faint greenish glow started to come into focus. Ulin's voice called out to her, louder and stronger. Maradin cried out for her, moving as fast as she could against the river. Then, she shrieked as the ground opened up underneath her. Her body plunged into a thick pool of hot liquid that enveloped her. She sputtered and swam toward the surface, gasping for breath as she reached air again.

Gasping for air, she waded in the slime, trying to orient herself. Around her, thick streamers of slime splashed down into the pool. As she peered above, a massive load of slime poured down on her face, threatening to drown her. Sputtering, she managed to swim out from underneath the thick waterfall and clear the greenish slime from her eyes.

Above her, something pulsed heavily above her. A dull green glow oozed out from the folds on the ceiling. As she waded, she saw

the glow gathered in one thick fold. A moment later, a thick outpouring of the hot slime rushed out from the fold and poured loudly into the pool near her. Waves of heat disbursed through the pool and her body rocked toward the edge, away from the splashing.

Swimming in the viscous liquid, she paddled toward a dark opening of a pipe, half a meter above the surface of the pool. The very edge was rough, where it crumbled underneath her malnourished weight. She managed to reach the very edge, but her fingertips slid along the slick surface despite the roughness. A rush of slime came down along the wall, most of it pouring down the pipe instead of in the pool. The remains poured down over the rough rock, destroying any chance she had of finding a grip. She pressed herself against the wall as the few last streamers came dribbling down off the pipe's edge.

Fear filled her as she jumped up for the edge again, missing it wildly. Her fingers trailed down the slimy walls until she splashed down into the pool again. Her weakness and the weight of her clothes drew her down, pulling her into the hot thick depths of the pool. Her breathing grew frantic as she realized she may drown. With desperate speed, she started to work herself out of the heavier clothes. She paused as she released her boot and felt it sink away into the murky depths.

Stripped down to her underwear and a light shirt, Maradin finally was able to wade in the pool of slime without struggling. Taking a deep breath, she swam back toward the edge of the pool, toward the pipe. Taking a deep breath, she surged up. Her fingers caressed the edge of the pipe, then slipped off. Maradin wailed with frustration.

“Maradin?”

Ulin's soft voice filled the pool and Maradin gasped, spinning around. Her friend was no where to be found, but her voice echoed through the sounds of pouring slime from above.

“Ulin?”

“Maradin!”

She finally heard the voice strongly from above her. Panting, she pressed up against the wall and peered up into the pulsating movement above. Green glow gathered in folds of something above her and she dodged out as hundreds of liters of slime poured out.

The current pushed her away from the pipe opening, but her eyes remained focused on ceiling, looking for her friend.

Then she saw her friend. Nestled in one of the folds was Ulin, her slender body half hidden in the shadowed depths. Even in the faint light, Maradin could see that she was naked, but unharmed. Greenish ooze clung to her body, dripping off her small breasts and pooling in the curves of her body. Maradin started to call out, then something else caught her attention. Something thick wiggled from between her friend's legs, a thick dripping length that seemed to glow with the same greenish glow. Maradin gasped as she stared up at her friend, seeing how the thick member seemed to twist and pull.

Ulin's face beamed down at her, "Maradin, it is you."

"Ulin... are you okay?"

Her friend nodded and reached out for her, despite the meters between them. Maradin gasped and reached out for her. Startling her, Ulin's body slipped out of the folds of the ceiling, lowering slowly into the greenish glow. Maradin screamed out as she focused on her friend's body, the naked skin glistening with the glowing juices. Her eyes focused at the thing between her legs, a wrinkled black tentacle that twisted and pushed inside her. Wet slurping noises grew louder as the tendrils holding Ulin lowered her even closer.

Maradin swam backwards, her fear pushing her as she stared widely at Ulin. A twisted knot of tentacles wrapped around her arms and legs, holding her safely. Ulin smiled broadly, then shuddered with a long moan as the thick tendrils started to drive into her, plunging in and out with wet slurping noises. Maradin could only stare as she watched the thick tendril push and pull, taking long meter-long strokes into Ulin's teenager body which enough of a woman to take them. As the tendril buckled to push inside her, Ulin's belly bulged with the thick member.

Ulin's body shuddered with an orgasm as her belly swelled with the thick member, then tightened as it withdrew with a wet dripping noise. Moans, wet and primal, filled the pool as the tentacle drove back into her, stuffing her until she swelled obscenely. As the tentacle drove in and out of her, each thrust filling her completely, a deep green glow began to glow from inside Ulin's

depths. The green oozed out from her stomach, growing strong with each powerful thrust.

“U... Ulin?”

“Ma... Maradin... please...”

Ulin’s voice dissolved into moans as the glowing grew strong as the thrusting dominated her body. Maradin watched as her friend’s labia stretched out with the tentacle, clutching along the slicked length before it rammed deep back inside. Ulin’s moans turned into loud gasps of pleasure as the glowing intensified. Her pleasure burst as she screamed out, her body shuddering with a mindless pleasure. The glowing exploded from her sex, pouring out in a huge river of slime that splashed down on Maradin’s face. She sputtered and wiped her eyes clear to the sound of Ulin’s breathless panting.

“... oh... Maradin.”

“Ulin! Are you okay?”

Ulin smiled broadly, hands flexing in the embrace of the tentacles, her hips rocking back and forth as the tentacle slowly withdrew from her sex, letting the last of the slime pour out.

“Yeah... I’m sorry...”

Maradin found it hard to wade in the water, her mind wheeling from her friend’s obvious enjoyment.

“W-What happened?”

“You remember last year, when I said I found that old man to take care of me?”

Maradin nodded, remembering the glow on the girl’s face when she showed up near spring.

“You mean...?”

The tentacles shifted on Ulin’s body, releasing her arms and sliding down to wrap around the small breasts. Ulin moaned softly as the tentacles slowly lowered her into the slime and released her. They slithered back up into the depths of the ceiling, leaving Maradin to float in the water with her friend. Ulin slipped through the viscous liquid, wrapping her nude body around Maradin. A heat flushed through her skin as she felt the soft skin and heated breath against her face.

“I came here like I always do. Every winter for the last five years.”

“But... you said...”

Ulin smiled, kicking her legs in the slime as she bobbed up and down, "I lied. Keeper must be a secret."

"Keeper?"

Gesturing up, Ulin smiled, "Keeper-of-Slime, the creature above us."

"Is it... what is it?"

"I don't know, but he takes care of me."

"Uh... he?"

She pointed up to one of the tendrils that hung loosely from the ceiling, the flared tip dripping with glowing slime.

"Oh."

Sighing happily, Ulin let the currents drift them apart and swam around, her naked body slipping easily through the slime. Maradin bobbed in the pool slowly, watching her friend slipping through the liquid, giggling softly. Maradin peered up at the other folds, where streamers of slime poured out of folds.

"A-Are there others... up there?"

Ulin nodded, beaming as she circled. "Yeah, about a dozen of them. Keeper needs as many as he can get, for what he does."

"What does he do?"

Ulin shuddered in organismic memory, "I... don't really care. It feels... so good."

Swimming up, Ulin wrapped her nude legs around Maradin's hips. Maradin struggled to keep up with the additional weight. Ulin made no effort to move as she wrapped her arms around, pressing her slick body against Maradin.

"You know... it feels good."

Maradin paused for a moment, sinking into the hot liquid, then shook her head violently, "What? No! I'm getting out of here!"

Ulin tightened her grip on Maradin, holding her tightly. Maradin was distinctly aware of the naked crotch pressing against her hips, a sexuality glowing in Ulin's eyes as she leaned closer, her slime-soaked lips centimeters away from Maradin's. Flushing, Maradin tried to swim, but the strange distraction was difficult to resist.

As Maradin tried to figure out her response, her mind unable to comprehend the sudden knowledge, the hot slime rose higher as their combined weight drew them down. Above them, something coiled from the hidden depths and dropped into the pool with a

splash. A wave of slime rose up toward them as a thick tentacle slashed through the slime. Maradin struggled to get out of the way, but Ulin's lips pressed against hers, interrupting her fear-filled movement. Stunned, Maradin was unable to resist as the thick tentacle wrapped around her and Ulin, the thick slick length sliding around their waist and Maradin's legs, pinning them with incredible strength.

Maradin started to cry out, but the passion in Ulin's kiss muted her struggles. Then a voice burst through her mind, dripping with honeyed words as it cut through her fear.

(Do not fear me, Maradin of the Streets.)

The mental communication with thick and rumbling, of ten-thousand waterfalls of slime all echoing in perfect harmony. The sensation of floating in an endless pool of thick liquid, caressed by the warmth, shivered down her spine, both mentally and physically. In an instant, there was no doubt that the creature, a masculine energy of incredible proportions was named Keeper-of-Slime. Her fear blew away as the Keeper's thoughts expanded with safety, incomprehensible thoughts of why she was safe from him and why there was no reason to fear; Maradin couldn't understand the reasons, but a feeling of being safe poured through her veins.

Maradin's struggles stopped in an instant, the voice and feelings echoing in her mind. Ulin moaned softly and broke the kiss, slime dripping from her lips.

"He spoke to you, didn't he?"

"H-How does he do that?"

Ulin moaned softly, kissing her again. Maradin blushed fiercely.

"And could you stop doing that?"

Smiling sheepishly, Ulin slipped away from Maradin's body. The tentacles slipped around them, releasing the elfin girl but wrapping back around Maradin's body. She struggled against the tentacles, but weakly.

(Don't struggle, I won't hurt you.)

"Please... please let me go."

Immediately, the tentacle loosed around her. She felt it slip away until only a single loop pressed against her body, holding her up in the deep pool of hot slime. Maradin rested her body on it, her arms thankful for the rest.

(I mean you no harm.)

“What... what do you want?”

Ulin giggled as she dove into the liquid, her body flashing in the green glow. The slime rippled along the surface before she surfaced again. Two tentacles dropped down from the ceiling. Reaching her arms up, Ulin moaned as the tentacles wrapped around her, one tentacle wrapping around her arms and legs, pulling them apart to exposed the slime-soaked pubic hair and swollen labia. The second tentacle lowered itself between her legs, the wedge-like tip of the tentacle dripping heavily.

Maradin found herself staring in rapt fascination as the tentacle tip pushed forward, nuzzling gentle up against the swollen folds. Ulin shuddered with a strange hunger that Maradin felt the pleasure in her own mind, transmitted through Keeper's strange mental communications. Her lips parted as she watched and felt Ulin's penetration, the thick tentacle easing into the girl's wet depths. Moaning in sync with Ulin's, Maradin's body grew heated as she watched the tentacle push into her friend, a wet slurping noise that filled the pool. Slime dripped down the entire length of the blackish tentacle as it forced its way further in. Ulin's stomach bulged as it worked its way further in and Maradin could feel the phantom sensations of something thick and squishing coiling deep inside her sex. Unable to control herself, she moaned as Ulin did, the tentacle finally filling her to her limits, then slowly withdrawing. The sensations of it leaving, an empty void of hunger behind, left Maradin whimpering.

When the creature pushed it back inside her, Maradin was overwhelmed with the incredible sensations and she felt her body sparkle with an orgasm, a short but powerful wave of ecstasy that flooded through her veins and left her gasping for breath. Ulin, on the other hand, remained hungry for more as the black tentacle drove in and out, the mental images fading from Maradin's mind as the young-looking girl was drawn back up into the depths of the ceiling and the Keeper.

(Did you enjoy that?)

The creature's mental thoughts helped push away the raw sexual memories. Maradin found the mental clarity to focus on the creature's actions.

“W-Why are you doing this?”

(Because I want you.)

“Me?”

Above her, she could hear Ulin’s moans of pleasure, writhing in the tentacle’s embrace. Maradin stared up at the ceiling, seeing more women nestled in the folds, their muted moans and orgasms drowned out by the thick streamers that poured out of their orifices and folds of the Keeper-of-Slime. Shivering with the half-faded memories, she looked away back to the pipe leading out, her fingers clutching to the tentacle. It felt strange, like a smooth skin over rippling muscles. It felt like a cock, a man’s cock, except for the incredible length and the twisting sensation it made underneath her hand. A thick dribble of slime oozed down its length, dripping off her fingers before splashing down into the pool’s surface.

(You can escape, if you want.)

“Really?”

In response, the tentacle wrapped around her body lifted her out of the pool. Drops of liquid splashed down as her body rose up to the edge of the pipe. Maradin scrambled on the lip. The tentacle released her, unwrapping from her body as it slipped back toward the pool. Maradin gasped as she crawled about a meter into the pipe. There, the slime felt cooler than in the pool, despite the heat she felt when she was crawling along it. A surge of ooze poured down the wall, flooding the pipe. It was hot for a moment, then quickly cooled in the stone pipe leading back into the darkness.

Hesitantly, she peered behind her as the sounds of moans filled the pipe. Ulin’s soft gasps of orgasm echoed loudly in her ears and she felt the urge to rescue her, to take her away from the creature.

(She doesn’t want to be rescued.)

Maradin could already feel that, the giggles and laughter from her friend mixed in with the moans of sexual pleasure. She curled up in the pipe, unwilling to enter the darkness and just as unwilling to return to the pool and its massive occupant. As the sounds of pleasure continued to filter down the pipe, she closed her eyes tightly.

“Please stop this!”

(I will not.)

“Why? Its wrong!”

(Why?)

Maradin sputtered as she tried to explain why, but no words came. Instead, the Keeper responded with soft, seductive thoughts.

(I give her and the others protection from the winter and cold. They give me what I need and I protect them.)

“B-But why are you doing this?”

A formless wave of indescribable emotions rolled through her thoughts. The creature’s needs could not be described with mere words or even descriptions, but somehow Maradin got the impression that the Keeper fed off sexual pleasures. She felt the pleasure more than understood it, her body growing heated with her own reflected passions. Shuddering in the pipe, her fingers dipped between her legs, her fingertips finding the seam of her own body, doubling the ecstasy vibrating through her mind.

“P-Please stop this.”

(No.)

Her fingers were unwilling to stop as she pushed aside the fabric of her panties, fingering herself into a frustrating orgasm. The hard thought from the Keeper did nothing to stop her pleasures.

“Why?”

(You need me, Maradin. Your pain above drew me to call to you.)

“My... pain?”

(Of freezing and cold, of the winter. I could feel your pain even from here and Ulin’s memories told me that you would be...) the pause felt strange in mental thoughts, (willing to submit.)

“Submit? To your sick perverted... things!?”

A wash of amusement filled her thoughts.

The thoughts turned harder and colder, (Then leave. Go back to the winter and survive through the night. And in a day’s time, your body will be just a frozen corpse in an alley. No church or monastery will take you, the shelters are already swollen with those fleeing the cold. Even giving up your body would barely give you a chance for warmth and food.)

Maradin pictured the outside, and the troubles she had every winter to find shelter. This year was just worse than others, but she remembered the crowded shelters and barely edible food.

In her mind, the Keeper continued with his purring thoughts, (And down here, you will be warm and cared for. When spring comes, I will release you as I have always done.)

“W-What about food?”

A hunger filled her and she found herself looking down at the slime that pooled around her. Licking her lips, she found the thoughts driving her to reach down, to cup the slime in her hands. Trembling, her hand moved with the creature’s will, reaching down to plunge her fingers into the warm liquid. Cupping it, the Keeper forced her to draw it up to her lips. The scent of the vicious liquid was the same as Ulin’s kiss and she felt a familiar ripple of pleasure between her lips. Shivering, she pressed her lips against it and drank in the flavor.

It was warm and smooth as it flowed down her throat, sating some of the hunger that gnawed at her stomach. Gasping, she lapped at her own hand, drinking down the thick liquid until she no longer felt hungry.

Looking down at her glistening hand, she felt a terrible pit of disgust growing in her stomach. Revulsion filled her for a moment, but the Keeper’s thoughts soothed them as he spoke back through her mind.

(I won’t hurt you, Maradin. All I offer is shelter from the winter, for just one winter.)

Maradin felt a pull toward the pool with the promise of shelter and comfort. Even the sexual sounds surrounding her did nothing to push her away. Whimpering, she pressed her hands against her ears, but her own thoughts filled in the rest of the noises. Her mind fought against itself, but she lost as she finally dropped one down between her legs, tracing the line of her slit in time with the moans of Ulin and the others.

Trembling, she made up her mind and crawled back toward the pool. Her body shivered as she reached the end of the pipe and peered down at the hot liquid swirling below. Carefully, she sat on the edge and took a deep breath.

“Keeper? Ulin?” To her, her voice sounded like a little child’s.

The Keeper didn’t answer, but Ulin’s moans stopped and her friend spoke in a lust-filled voice.

“Maradin?”

“Will... will he be gentle?”

“Oh...” the voice trailed off in a single moan of passion, but his words thrummed through her mind.

(I will be as gentle as you need.)

“Keeper?”

(Yes?)

“Be gentle?”

Three tentacles uncoiled from the ceiling, dripping with slime. Three wedged tips hovered in the air, dancing for a moment before slipping down. Maradin shivered as she felt the first heated touch against her arms and legs. She raised her arms into the air, like Ulin and gasped as she felt it slither around her arms, wrapping around and threading around as it caught her arms. She gasped with the sensations as the second tentacle slithered around her legs, gently pulling them apart as it picked her off the edge of the pipe.

The feeling of being held in the air, above a pool of slime with strange as her body was already warming to the sexual pleasures she remembered Ulin enjoying. Her eyes caught sight of the young-looking woman, caught in her own throes of intense pleasure. Her vision caught a growing glow in Ulin’s belly and she saw it intensity as the tentacles drew her underneath her friend. Closing her eyes, she waited until she heard Ulin’s gasp, then the hot waterfall of slam splash into her, soaking her body with the steaming liquid of the Keeper’s fluids. The flavor of the creature’s slime reminded her of the taste from before and she opened her mouth to drink it in. Ulin’s body above her writhed in ecstasy but she was interrupted by the feelings of the third tentacle slipping up her body.

The tip was hot, hotter than the slime as it stroked up her belly, working at the shirt around her chest. She felt it rubbing against her breasts, teasing out the nipples until they ached with need. The tip worked underneath the fabric and she felt the hot wiggling length worked underneath, pushing aside her shirt and wrappings around her breasts. She gasped as the tentacle circled around her breast, teasing it and stroking it. As the thick heated length caressed against her nipples, she moaned. The slime-soaked fabric began to tear as the tentacle wrapped around her chest. With a wet tearing sound, it finally gave up and slapped the surface of the pool as it fell off.

Maradin moaned loudly as she felt the cool air against her skin, but the tentacle continued to move, sliding down her slime-slicked skin to press against her underwear. The fabric ripped as it stroked down, teasing her inner thigh and sliding the tip down the entire length of her slit and past her buttocks. The tip teased against the crack of her ass as it continued down, sliding a meter or more between her legs, leaving her feeling shaken with the intense sensations. The tentacle tip curved around her legs and wormed its way back up her body, wrapping her in the heated length of twisting muscles.

The wedged tip continued to slide up her body, increasing the pressure against her slit and rubbing against her clitoris as it worked up to her breasts and then over her shoulder. The tentacle continued to slide down her body, around her legs, and back up in one long stroke of pleasure. The tip continued its path, slipping over her shoulder and trailing down her back, the entire length of the tentacle dragging along her skin. The tip worked further down until it eased its way past her outstretched legs, curling back to press up against the folds of her sex.

Maradin moaned loudly, whimpering with need as she silently begged for the tentacle to take her. The Keeper left a feeling of pleasure in her mind as the tentacle finally pressed up against her opening, circling and twisting around the slick hole. The tip pushed further in, stretching her open as the thick head worked in and out, filling her with the incredible sensations of being penetrated.

Pleasures grew as the tentacle continued to slide across her entire body, the tip working in and out with harder and faster strokes. The wedge finally managed to push into her, the flared tip spreading out inside her innermost depths. Maradin moaned loudly, whimpering with need as the tentacle drew out, expanding even more as it drew out. The Keeper's member plunged back into her, filling her with hot hardness, slipping in and out.

It was gentle, more gentle than Ulin's penetration, but it felt like the most indescribable pleasure as it filled her, slipping deep inside. She felt it stretching her inner walls, wiggling and twisting deep inside. Her hips rocked up against the air, a hunger burned painfully as she silently begged for the Keeper to do more.

Wet slurping filled the chamber, even over the splashing of the pools, as her body exploded in an orgasm. The tentacles didn't stop, driving up and into her, with just a hint of the coiling that she remembered from Ulin. For her body, unused to the thick muscle twisting inside her, the sensations at the limits of her mind and body.

Then, she felt the tentacle start to surge. It was a strange feeling of heat rising through the length. She could barely trace it with her mind as her body exploded in another orgasm as the wave of heat coursed around her breasts, down her stomach, around her legs, back up her body, around to her back and finally, with the infinite expectation, it exploded inside her.

The entire tentacle doubled in girth as it filled her and she shrieked out with the suddenness as it plunged inside. The heat exploded right before a jet of thick, hot liquid poured into her. Her vagina expanded slightly, bulging out her abdomen as the pressure built. Then it coursed out of her sex, squeezing around the thick tentacle and splashing down into the pool with a startling loud noise. The feeling of being taken, filled with the Keeper's juices was too much as she let herself explode in a single, mindless orgasm.

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It was spring before she saw the sunlight again. The bright yellowed light hurt her eyes as she staggered down the pipe, away from the Keeper and back into the world. The thread-bare shift she wore felt strange after so many months of tentacles, slime, and heat. Her left hand tugged at it, trying to make the constriction somehow comfortable.

She paused a few meters from the opening. Beyond, her eyes started to make out colors, the green and brown waters of the Lux river and an occasional boat that slid through the water, appearing and disappearing from the small opening.

Ulin paused ahead of her, trim legs showing off her narrow hips. Crouching down in the thin trickle of slime, she turned back to Maradin.

“Maradin?”

Maradin peered back into the darkness, a boiling hunger still burning between her legs. She could feel her body growing slick

with excitement as she considered crawling back, to the folds and pleasure. She heard Ulin come back, wrapping one arm around her.

“Don’t.”

Maradin looked up, confused and torn, “Why? He’s... he’s perfect. There is no pain, no starving. We don’t have to beg and we don’t have to whore.”

Sadness filled Ulin’s eyes and Maradin saw some of the same hunger reflected in the brown gaze.

“I know. But all the girls who go back now... they are never seen again.”

“Keeper would never hurt us.”

Tears formed on Ulin’s cheeks, “During the winter, he would never hurt us. We feed him and we love him. But, during the spring, he eats more than just our passion. The girls who go back... they become part of his spring feeding.”

A haunted look crosses Ulin’s face, “Sometimes, I stay here, listening. I can hear their screams... screaming of more passion that I could ever take, but it always ends. Then, I’m all alone in the darkness, waiting for him to come.”

Ulin shook her head, “So... you can’t go back.”

Maradin reached up with a hand, stroking Ulin’s cheek. A faint memory of the winter, when their bodies were intertwined with each other, tentacles thrusting inside both of their bodies, brought a flush to her cheeks. She enjoyed the memory as she spoke softly, a whisper.

“Will you?”

Ulin smiled with a haunted grin, “Yes, I think I will. But, not for many winters.”

Maradin brought Ulin’s lips to her own, kissing them. Soft sighs filled the pipe as they held each other for a long time, kissing. When Ulin finally broke the kiss, there were tears in her eyes.

“We need to leave. I can’t stay much longer.”

Maradin smiled, “For you.”

Together, they crawled out of the pipe and stood up on the edge of the Lux river. Next to them, the rusted ladder stood there mutely, just a little more rusted from the bitter winter. Ulin tapped her shoulder and pointed across the river.

From another pipe, a woman in her forties crawled out, wearing the same simple shift. She caught the two girl's eyes and smiled briefly before racing up a stairs. As her bare feet slapped against the weathered stone, her form blurred. By the time she reached the top of the stairs, she was almost invisible. The older woman paused, barely visible in the sunlight, and disappeared into the street beyond.

Maradin gasped, "How did she do that!?"

Ulin drew her toward the ladder, "Keeper. All of us changed after the first winter. Old May is the one who brought me to the Keeper the first time. She can turn invisible at will, kind of nice."

Still staring across the river, Maradin let Ulin push her back against the ladder. Her eyes drifted over to Ulin.

"You changed too?"

Ulin grinned and smiled, "Yes."

"Can you turn invisible also?"

Shaking her head, Ulin pressed herself against Maradin, pinning her between her young-looking body and the hard metal ladder.

"I don't age. Every spring, I'm the same age as the first time I found the Keeper."

"How?"

"I don't know, but why look a gift horse in the mouth?"

"Yeah..."

Neither said anything for a moment. Down the middle of the river, a heavy boat started one of the first trips of spring, with a brace of thriban workers lugging things as it slid down the dirty water. Their grayish skin sparkled with sweat as they lifted huge crates and carried them from one end of the boat to the other.

Ulin kissed her soft, "Maradin?"

"Uh... yes?"

"We need to come up with a story. We have to keep the Keeper secret."

"Oh... together?"

"Yeah, I would like that."

Maradin thought for a moment, "What about last year? You shacked up with a dirty old man who wanted something pretty for the winter."

"The both of us? A pair of homeless sluts for the winter."

Grinning, Maradin, “Yeah, but why not an old woman? Wanted some servants for the winter?”

Ulin purred as she kissed Maradin again, “I like the sluts bit.”

Maradin returned the kiss, “Fine, a dirty old woman, sluts and the servants.”

“Sounds like a perfect story.”

Maradin felt a tightness in her chest, a fading hunger to crawl back into the pipe. With a supreme effort, she turned around and started to climb the ladder. Behind her, Ulin grinned to herself and followed.

Reaching the top, Maradin paused.

“Ulin?”

“Yes?”

“Do you think I will change?”

“I think so, but the fun part is finding out how.”

“How do we do that?”

“I’m thinking about practicing our servant sluts story a few times... then maybe scaring up some dinner.”

Maradin felt a hot wash of excitement growing across her skin, pooling between her legs. Closing her eyes, she finished climbing up the sun-warmed ladder to take on the world again.

At least until next winter.

t'Sade

About the Author

t'Sade has been happily using third-person singular since the late eighties. Besides that strange quirk, they enjoy writing a brutal combination of sex and violence for decades. Most of their stories explore the fringe edges of sexuality in the epic quest of trying to write a story for every fetish and turn-on known to the human libido.

It's going to take a long time.

Their writing can be found on their website, tsade.com. Most of it is free to read and enjoy.

t'Sade

About the Publisher

Curious Cabbit Press is a small erotic press located in the heart of the United States. They can be found at curiouscabbit.com or possibly at your favorite retailer.